

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending. Applicants elect with traverse Group I (claims 1-7) for examination on the merits. The right to prosecute nonelected subject matter in a further patent application is reserved.

Notwithstanding the above election, reconsideration of the restriction requirement is requested because examination of all pending claims would not constitute a serious burden. Although the inventions identified by the Examiner are separately patentable, both the need for compact prosecution and the public interest would be served by examination of all claims in a single application. In particular, the claims of Groups I and IV should be examined in the same application because they are related as combination-subcombination. Thus, claim 17 should not be withdrawn from consideration.

Further, in accordance with the Commissioner's Notice of March 26, 1996 (1184 OG 86) implementing the Federal Circuit's decisions of *In re Ochiai*, 37 USPQ2d 1127 (1995) and *In re Brouwer*, 37 USPQ2d 1663 (1996), Applicants request rejoinder of the nonelected process claims upon an indication that an elected product claim is allowable.

Applicants earnestly solicit an early and favorable examination on the merits. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if additional information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

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